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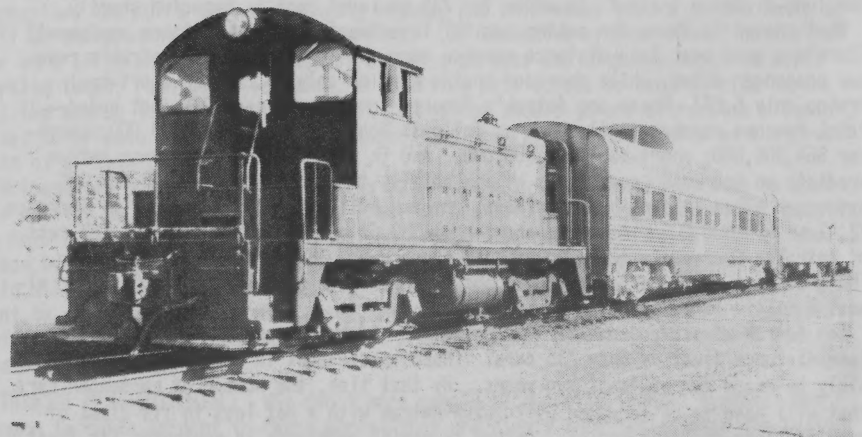

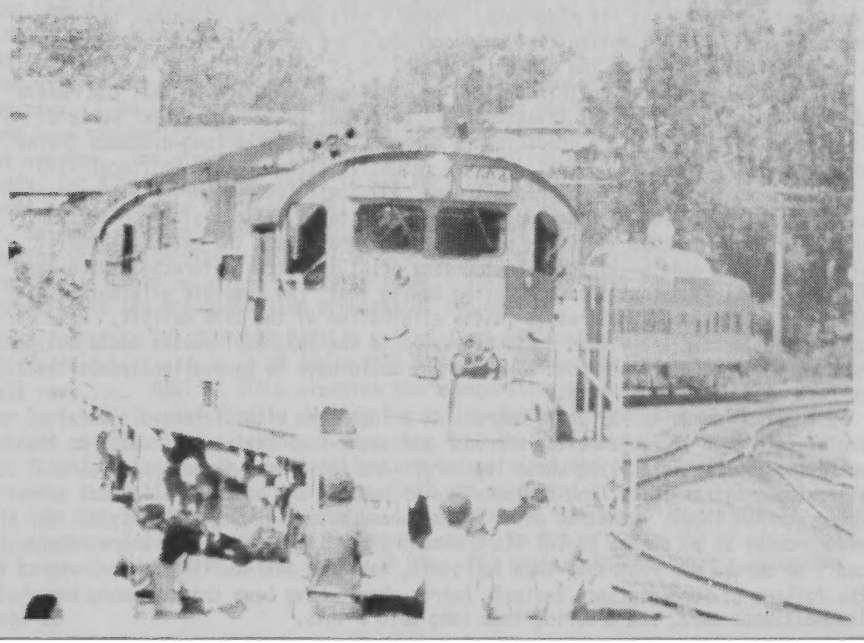

rail travel newsletter

30¢

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SECOND ISSUE OF
AUGUST 1974
#90

ON THE COVER:

(Front cover) The northbound ADIRONDACK, Amtrak train 69, powered by a pair of the well-known D&H Alco PA engines, leaves Whitehall, NY where it meets the southbound train. (Rear cover) top: train 68 at Albany, NY--a Penn Central switcher couples to the D&H cars, including a leased Canadian Pacific coffee shop dome coach now in D&H colors. It will place the 3 MTA coaches on the rear of an Empire Service train and then back off with the dome still attached, since the latter will not run between Albany and New York, due to tunnel clearances. Bottom: train 68 arrives at the old D&H passenger station in Plattsburgh, NY, with a consist including a pair of Alco freight low nose units, 3 MTA coaches and a CP dome. Deadheading behind the engines is a former EL coach in D&H colors. Photos by Ken Maylath.

Express Ads

AZTEC SPECIAL, A SPECIAL TRAIN from San Francisco/Los Angeles/El Paso to Mexico's fabulous Yucatan. Route includes CH-P's spectacular Copper Canyon line (with open sightseeing car), FC del Pacifico to Mazatlan and Guadalajara, N de M, Unidos del Sureste and the old "Mexicano" electrified cliff-hanging line. Mainline, not-so-mainline and branch railroading. Stops include Mexico City, Patzcuaro, Morelia (with special organ concert), Puebla, Merida, Mayan ruins, Palenque, Veracruz (sightseeing by open trolley), Fortin, San Miguel Allende, Guanajuato and more. Train includes Great Western Tours lightweight sleepers "Golden Gate," "Silver Canyon," "Imperial Sands," double-unit diner-lounge "Adventurer-Nomad." Accommodations vary from upper berth to drawing room. This is a 3-week trip, departing Nov. 15. Fares start at $995, and include deluxe hotels when not aboard train, sightseeing, almost all meals, and much more. Send for free brochure: GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton-Palace Hotel, 639 Market Street, San Francisco 94105.

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$1--Railfans' Multimodal Transportation Guide to Vicinity of Los Angeles Union Station; order S #119-R. $2.50--San Joaquin Newspapers--Amtrak Lovefest over a New Train; order "Joy in the Valley." R.J. Swan, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90801.

NEW ADVERTISING RATES FOR RTN effective September 5, 1974: Express Ads 50¢ per line for line of 80 characters and spaces. Display ads: $25 per page (5x8 inches), $12.50 half page, $6.25 quarter page. These rates are necessitated by increased costs of paper and printing, and by increased readership of RTN. RTN ads remain a tremendous bargain in their field. Write: Message Media, Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709.

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HERE WE ARE back again with a big 24-page issue of RTN for your reading pleasure. The two major feature articles in this issue cover Amtrak's two newest trains, running a continent apart--the EXPO 74 and the ADIRONDACK--ridden by our intrepid rail traveling correspondents, Glenn Lee and Ken Maylath. Next issue: who knows?

PREVIEW OF AMTRAK FALL OPERATIONS

Amtrak's fall timetables, effective September 15, will be appearing soon, and here we give you an advance look at some of the changes you can expect to find in them.

Amtrak's new Chicago to Pt. Huron, Michigan train is scheduled to have its inaugural press run on Friday, Sept. 13, with regular service beginning Sept. 16.

Starting with a first southbound trip Dec. 13 and a first northbound one Dec. 15 will be Amtrak's regular special winter New York-Florida train, in former times known as the FLORIDA SPECIAL. Last year the train was called the VACATIONER, and this year it's the MIAMIAN, leaving New York at 12:35pm and reaching Miami at 1:50 pm the next day. Northbound it leaves Miami at 3:40pm and pulls into New York at 4:50pm next day. Train numbers are 89 (southbd) and 90.

This fall, Poinciana FL will be added as a stop for the FLORIDIAN and the CHAMPION. The FLORIDIAN will run a little earlier to accommodate the extra stop, which will be made at 6:40am southbound and 8:35pm northbound. The train will continue to arrive at 10:30am in St. Petersburg, but will leave there at 5:45pm instead of 6:00. The Miami section of the train will reach that city 5min earlier, at 10:55am, and depart northbound 15min earlier, at 5:15pm. The CHAMPION's New York departure time is unchanged (3:50pm), but it reaches St. Petersburg 20min later, at 5:20pm. The SILVER METEOR arrives and departs New York at the same hours as now, but its trip is lengthened by 5min, with the schedule adjusted at the Miami end. The SILVER STAR southbound makes Florida arrivals 5-10min later than now, with St. Petersburg and Miami sections splitting at Auburndale; northbound the train leaves Miami at 1pm (instead of 3pm), leaves St. Pete at 2:15pm, and reaches New York at 6:15pm next day. The last trip of the winter season MIAMIAN will leave northbound April 7, 1975 and southbound April 5.

The PANAMA LIMITED will no longer serve Hazelhurst, Miss., effective Sept. 15. The INTER-AMERICAN will add a flag stop at Walnut Ridge, Ark. at 8:05pm southbd and 9:25am northbd/ and also at Newport, Ark. at 8:50pm southbd and 8:40am north.

On the EMPIRE BUILDER, service will be available at Browning, Montana Sept. 16 thru April 7, and at Glacier Park, Montana April 8, 1975 thru Sept. 14, 1975 (both flag stops).

Not appearing in public timetables because of lateness of the change will be a flag stop for the MONTREALER at Northampton, Mass. at 1:20am northbd and 2:25am southbd. In the Northeast Corridor, for train 167, add a "d" (discharge only) stop at Capital Beltway at 9:59pm, and Washington arrival at 10:15pm instead of 10:10. On train 177, discontinue the "j" stop at Capital Beltway. Train 180 will omit the Metropark stop on weekdays because of massive commuter overloading.

On Sept. 15 the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA goes back to tri-weekly operation except for holidays, as reported last issue, a change that is being strongly protested by Northwestern passenger groups. The EXPO 74 is scheduled to make its last trip on Sept. 14.

SUMMARY OF RECENT AMTRAK DERAILMENTS

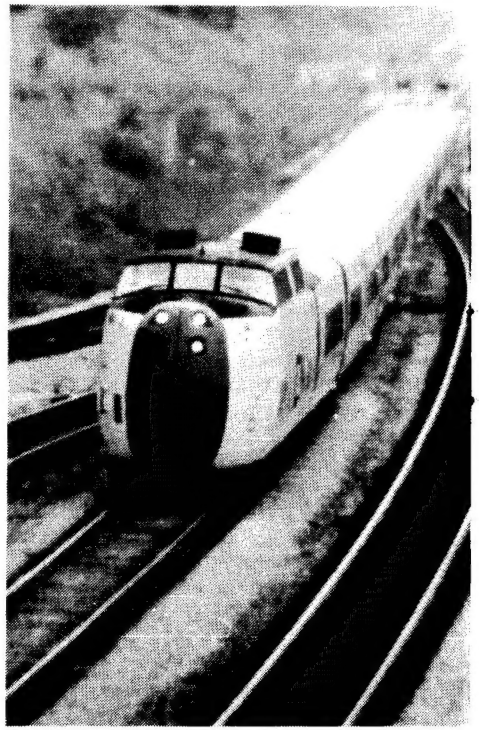
The SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, like it predecessor CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO in bygone days, became an all-sleeper train at 9:25pm Aug. 14 when the 5 coaches of the westbound train derailed in the Ogden yard, and were removed from the consist. There were 2 minor passenger injuries reported. Coach passengers were bused on, arriving Oakland about 11½ hours late, while the train arrived 4½ hours late.

A NY-Florida train, apparently the SILVER STAR derailed 3 miles south of Wake Forest NC after 8pm Aug. 12. There were 28 slight injuries. Ten of 12 cars derailed but none overturned. There were 270 passengers aboard.

Three cars of the consist being made up for the southbound FLORIDIAN derailed

in Penn Central's 12th St. coach yard in Chicago on Aug. 12, slightly injuring 3 employees and delaying the train's departure by 1hr 27min.

canadian news letter



WHATEVER YOU READ in the American press these days about Prime Minister Trudeau's plan for forming a "Cantrak" organization to take over operations of Canadian passenger trains is probably mostly speculation. A Ministry of Transport spokesman in Ottawa told RTN that nothing has been planned or done on the transportation matter since the early July elections. Most legislators are currently vacationing, and the earliest the House could consider the plan would be after Labour Day, when it reconvenes. There is no news to report beyond the initial outline of the plan given in these pages in earlier issues.

TURBOTRAIN SERVICE BEGAN between Montreal and Ottawa on CN with one round trip daily effective Aug. 6. The Turbo runs replace conventional trains, leaving Ottawa 8:15am as Train 31 (except Sundays) on a 1hr 59min schedule; returning from Ottawa as Train 32, leaving 11:20am on a 2hr 10min run. The trips are made by the 3rd and spare Turbo set which is held in Montreal's CN Central Station as protection for the daily Montreal-Toronto turbo trip. Attractive small brochures were issued by CN to announce the change. In the photo above, the CN Turbo is climbing the hill out of Toronto at the Danforth station after its 4:30pm departure for Montreal on July 14. Photo by Fred Matthews.

CANADA'S LRC TRAIN--(light, rapid, comfortable) began two days of demonstration runs on CN between Montreal and Ottawa on Aug. 12. It was then scheduled to run for two more days on CP Rail between the same cities. After that it was scheduled for movement to Pueblo, Colorado, where the U.S. Dept. of Transportation would test it at its rail test facilities.

The U.S. test will be made in October, at the invitation of the Federal Railroad Administration. Before that time, locomotive modifications are to be made and additional tests run in Canada. The federal Transportation Development Agency is spending about $500,000 for this development program. The U.S. tests will take an expected two months, after which the lightweight train is to return to Canada for revenue operation on CN's Toronto-Windsor line. For this service, the engine and single prototype coach filled with test equipment will be used, along with conventional CN passenger cars. No orders for the train have yet been placed with the builders, but both CN and CP have agreed to try out the train under a possible federally-funded demonstration program. The builders are obviously hoping that United States buyers, primarily Amtrak, will be interested in the train.

The LRC is expected to reach a top speed of 120mph, tho it has been tested only to 95mph so far. On the Montreal-Ottawa runs, which were pronounced successful by

government and railroad officials, the train was limited to 70mph. Praise was given to the train's low noise level and powered banking motions on curves.

THE DISCONTINUANCE OF CP Rail's Victoria-Courtenay, B.C. train on Vancouver Island has been asked by the railroad early this month. The RDC car makes a daily-except-Sunday round trip, operated by the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway, a subsidiary of CP. Previously the CTC denied abandonment on grounds that CP had actively been discouraging business. Within two weeks of the present petition, active opposition was developing. The mayor of Nanaimo publicly called for 3 round trips daily instead of one, and another official announced that she would campaign for a 30-mile extension of the railway to Campbell River, and the issue appears to be heading for much publicity.

STRIKING TRANSIT WORKERS in Montreal refused to obey a court injunction to return to work the weekend of August 10-11, causing serious disruption to the city's daily life. A total of 1890 transit workers were joined by 290 office staff and cashiers. The city's Metro subway was stopped, affecting 500,000 users. Surface buses continued to run, but without backup from maintenance workers, causing some disruption of schedules.

Only a few days later, Toronto's transit workers also went on strike, closing down the city's 26-mile subway system, 1100 buses, 150 trolleys, and 386 streetcars. Office absenteeism was high, with many riders simply unable to get to work in the huge traffic tieups that followed. Also heavily hit were the needle-trades industries. GO Transit dial-a-buses, intercity coaches, airport buses, racetrack specials and other similar services were also halted, repeating problems being experienced in Montreal, Los Angeles County, San Francisco's Eastbay, and elsewhere as labor unrest becomes widespread in the transit industry.

CITY OF EDMONTON plans to begin construction this fall on the first section of its rapid transit project--a surface-to-subway transition structure on the CN right of way 4 blocks east of the passenger station. Tenders for the estimated $2.5 million contract are to be opened in September. Work on the line is proceeding following announcement of a $15 million provincial grant. Service on the 5½-mile Northeast line is expected to begin in spring, 1978, in time for Edmonton's hosting of the Commonwealth Games that year.

CALGARY HAS RECEIVED a similar $15 million grant for rapid transit construction, but as no definite plans have been developed for a rail transit route, the Stampede City is banking the sum in a special trust account pending a plan.

PROVINCE OF ALBERTA has purchased control of Pacific Western Airlines, thus edging out the White Pass & Yukon Railroad conglomerate, which had been seeking control earlier this year. Reportedly, Alberta was concerned about PWA's intro-Alberta air routes, and feared outside control would cause service deterioration.

CP RAIL'S "CANADIAN" transcontinental run has been held at 7 to 8 sleepers and one diner for the summer peak period, down from 11-12 sleepers and 2 diners, a consist used until 1970. However, a fourth coach has been showing up some days, indicating a strong demand for transcon service.

75 NEW ELECTRIC trolley coaches for Edmonton have been delayed from the Western Flyer assembly plant at Winnipeg, partially from a shortage of wheels. When it was found that wheels from old Brill trolleys would fit the new design, used trolleys in Calgary were purchased and their wheels sent east to help speed delivery.

A CHALLENGE TO competing rail service, an STOL (short takeoff and landing) craft government demonstration project began in late July between Montreal and Ottawa. The 2-year project is planned to attract buyers to help revitalize Canada's aircraft industry.

TRAVELERS GOING SOUTH to the U.S. on Amtrak can buy tickets on the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL from CN ticket sellers, but CN people are forbidden to sell any Amtrak tickets for farther east, not even to Spokane's Expo, supposedly because of competition. This hurts rail business on the Vancouver-Seattle route, among others, and some feel that Amtrak needs its own sales rep in Vancouver.

NOTES ON PHILADELPHIA COMMUTING

by Pete Roehm

Having to spend a couple of days in Philadelphia on ICG business, I was determined to wrap up my stay with a look at a few of the many goodies offered by the Philly rail scene; in this case, the PRSL, PATCO, the Red Arrow trolleys, and where required, PC and RDG commuter lines.

Friday evening, August 9, I whisked myself quickly to the PATCO station at Locust and Fifteenth for the last departure out that would arrive in time to make the PRSL Cape May connection. The PATCO ride was smooth and silent, and this fine example of rail transit shows what can be done here and now with today's technology and without having to wait for some of the rather dubious schemes for air cushion ride vehicles and Skybus projects that seem to be nothing more than tactical maneuvers to avoid dealing with transit.

Arrival in Lindenwold, New Jersey, was about 10 minutes in front of the PRSL departure, and during the entrance into the terminal one could look down and to the side and see the lineup of grimy but serviceable PRSL Budd cars. Thru the station and outside I found myself turning the corner and heading "outback" to the PRSL ticket "booth." A lineup of people indicated that this first of two Friday evening departures for the south coast would be full. Upon boarding car M-403, the lead car of the 2-car train and the Cape May/Wildwood section, I found it packed and smoky but otherwise clean. Most of the patronage appeared to be businessmen heading to their summer retreats for the weekend, altho weeknight patronage is not bad.

The train left 10 minutes late for its 80-mile run that would take only 1hr 24min by the schedule, and with time being made up in practice as well. At Winslow Junction, where the Atlantic City line shoots directly east, we made a 2-min operational stop and then headed off at one helluva pace for Tuckahoe, having made up 5min of our lost time in the process. The Budds were traveling at least in the 70's as we sliced across the low country of South Jersey and arrived at Tuckahoe. Here the trailing car would drop off and run to Ocean City. On we went with our first detraining stop at Cape May Court House, now just 2 minutes behind schedule. Then to Rio Grande, where a charter bus of the Five Mile Beach Bus Line meets the train and takes the passengers into Wildwood. The Wildwood stub-end station still stands forlornly and boarded up but patronage to these points no longer justifies its own Budd car. About one third of the car's occupants got off at each of these two stops with the remaining third riding on to end-of-track at Cape May.

The passenger who shared a seat with me, a banker maintaining addresses in both the Main Line and Cape May Court House, mentioned that the Penn-Reading was plagued on occasion by slow orders but generally did quite well and often hit the 80's as it sped its patrons between shore and city. There is one stretch of highway between Winslow and Tuckahoe where, according to this rider, the New Jersey State Police pick up a lot of speeders. Seems that when the Budds roll past doing between 70 and 80 a few of the more heavy-footed motorists cannot bear to see a train head them off and thus begin to pace it. Aware of this, the troopers know where to look to either get a good start on the day or wrap up a bad one at the expense of the gas guzzlers. Even the wildlife have become negatively involved: a recent "meet" between a deer and a high-speed Budd bent the pilot and underframe section agsinst the wheels and thus delayed the train an hour-plus, while both pilot and deer were disengaged so that the unhappy commuters could get on to their appointments.

Returning to Philly that evening on a Transport New Jersey (they operate the PCC cars in Newark) bus (it left 15min after the PRSL arrived) and in talking with the driver, I was advised that he can rarely make the Philly-Cape May run in less than 2½ hours; the PRSL does it in 1hr 24min and at a cost of $3.50 compared to the bus at $4.35.

This "high-speed" service must be most welcome to weary commuters making that long drive between shore and city, and it is just too bad that the cars are not kept cleaner on the exterior. Whereas the outside looks as tho it gets a washing but once a year, the interior is adequate even if the "No Smoking" sign is still bearing a Pennsylvania RR keystone monogram and thus gives the feeling that little has been done for years on the cars except to add the NJDOT emblem outside. But this run is a fast, minimal-stop operation that is exactly what so many commuters crave for their own. The train is used, especially in the summer, and it would be a shame for the service to terminate (the PRSL would love the thought). In contrast, my own B&M commute takes 1hr 18min to go 36 miles, compared to this PRSL 80-mile run in 1hr 24min. The PRSL makes two operational and two passenger stops; the B&M makes from 7 to 11 passenger stops, the fast run still taking 1hr 13min to accomplish.

LETTERS

The recent comments by Glenn Lee and Dave Randall (on car design) were both very timely and appropriate. The most practical course may lie somewhere in between. The hi-level car still makes good economic sense if it does not conflict with east-west interchangeability, and it is a pleasure to ride.

Some Western cars need to be able to move east, but not all of them need to. The following is offered as a starter that could be implemented fairly readily:

Amtrak has some 60 ex-Santa Fe coaches, 6 diners, and 6 coffee-shop lounges. This is enough coaches to equip 12 trains of 5 coaches each. The diners and lounges would equip 6 trains. This is enough to protect two cross-country schedules and the most appropriate would probably be the SOUTHWEST LIMITED and SUNSET LIMITED where hi-level operation is already familiar.

It is suggested that Amtrak take the basic body shell of the existing cars and design a sleeping car interior to fit. An immediate order for 36 hi-level sleepers would be placed with Budd, enough for 3 per train along with an order for 6 more hi-level diners and 6 more lounges using the existing plans. In addition, 12 hi-level baggage-dormitory cars would be ordered, using revision of existing shells. This would create 12 11-car trains of high capacity and deluxe quality with a minimum of lead time and would permit further evaluation of the hi-level concept. A number of low level cars would be released in the process for use elsewhere.

Since the new GM Amtrak locomotives are about the same height as hi-level cars, no transition car would be needed. In fact, the existing transition cars with the built-in hump might be useful for running hump-forward on the rear of the train to provide a transition down to low level cars when added to the hi-level train, and the interior of these transition cars could be possibly reconfigured to serve some special purpose such as additional lounge space. This might fit in well with the operation of the coast-to-coast sleeper and tour cars frequently operated on the SUNSET.

In instances where "convertible" cars (seats on tracks, etc.) are needed, they are an economy, but where they are not needed they are uneconomic. The hi-level coaches are high-capacity by their very nature and do not need expanded seating, particularly in an assignment such as this where the needs are the same day after day. To meet Dave Randall's requirements, not all of the Western trains could be hi-level entirely, but the basic, minimum train could be with add-on transition and low level cars for peak seasons. This would leave enough all-purpose cars to permit adequate east-west transfer without sacrificing the hi-level concept and would not require a larger total fleet, as Randall wishes to avoid. The ex-Santa Fe cars are in excellent condition and this would be the best disposition to make of them to take advantage of the many years of service left in them.

Dr. Dan Monaghan
Dallas City-County Amtrak Committee
Garland, Texas

mixed train of thoughts

THE TEHACHAPI LOOP was seen by Amtrak passengers for the first time on Aug. 26 when the COAST STARLIGHT--one train each direction, one day only--was detoured between Oakland and Los Angeles on Santa Fe thru the San Joaquin Valley and over SP's sacrosanct route thru the Tehachapi Mountains. Reason was a big freight pileup on SP at San Ardo along the coast..... MACON AND ATLANTA, Georgia may one day be linked by a rail commuter connection. A consulting engineer reported late this month that electric push-pull trains or Turbotrains would be best, and preferably running on Central of Georgia's right of way--a proposition that the railroad opposes. New tracks would cost $700,000 a mile, while upgrading CofG's would run $350,000 a mile..... DINING CAR CONDITIONS on Amtrak: the rail corporation has decided to clear cars of all food after a run ("No food takes a round trip now") after two reported instances of food poisoning. Two people on the BROADWAY LIMITED out of New York July 21 complained, and 10 riders on the EMPIRE BUILDER that left Seattle Aug. 6 apparently came down with gastric illness, tho not serious. And a rat ran out of the kitchen of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR eastbound into Denver late in August, frightening dining car patrons. When the train reached Chicago the car was removed and fumigated, requiring replacement with a GN ranch car, a lunch counter affair. The car was stocked quickly at the last minute, and a few things were forgotten--like cups, for instance. But the crew tried to make do, spreading linens on the counter, and bumping into each other in the crowded space. Two waiters couldn't take it and got into a fist fight in front of the passengers. One cook quit, and the train riders were understandably upset. All because of a rat.....

* * *

MAYBE THIS WAS one of those creative new ideas we were to expect from Amtrak: running a parlor observation car at the head of a train, coupled to the next car without diaphragm, standard buffer, or tightlock coupler on the observation end. This appeared on the westbound NORTH COAST HIAWATHA August 11, involving car 3770 "Port of Seattle." Quipped one rider: "It makes for a breezy and damn dangerous passage to lunch"..... AND RIDERS ON the forementioned train have found a disparity in prices of drinks--$1.40 in the pub, but $1.75 in the parlor car buffet. Is someone perhaps making a little on the side?..... GN GREAT DOME "Mountain View," idle most of the summer, has been moved to Beech Grove shops for air conditioning work..... A REMINDER THAT Western long-distance fares will drop about 9% effective Sept. 8 comes in an Aug. 21 Amtrak press release. After complaints about lack of promotion for the EXPO 74, the release speaks of the exposition as a "resounding success" and urges riders to rail travel to Spokane during the off-season fall period. The roundtrip Seattle-Spokane fare drops from $38 to $35. The expo continues thru Nov. 3. (Other fare reductions: Chicago-Spokane from $189 to $174.50; Los Angeles -Spokane $171.50 to $157. Family fares allow more savings.)..... BEGINNING IN SEPTEMBER, Amtrak will provide free blankets as well as pillows to coach riders on long-distance trains. The corporation also reports that a new policy of reserved seatings for dining car dinners is being implemented on Florida trains, and will next be phased into Chicago-West Coast trains, followed by the COAST STARLIGHT and the SUNSET LIMITED..... AMTRAK BROCHURES ON Bermuda Rail-Sail vacations and package tours to Walt Disney World in Florida can be obtained by writing Amtrak Travel Centers, Box 3000, Bellmore NY 11710..... MR. ARTHUR LLOYD, formerly in charge of Amtrak's tour operations in Washington, takes over as Western Regional Manager, headquartered in L.A., as of September 3..... AND WE NEGLECTED to report earlier that Amtrak Executive Vice President J. Richard Tomlinson resigned--one report said "in disgust"--in August..... DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION has been asked by a group of Western legislators to name as Amtrak's next experimental route a run to Portland and Los Angeles from Chicago, the train splitting up at Green River WY..

(continued on page 20)

the ADIRONDACK

Kenneth A. Maylath

It happened quickly, the advent of the ADIRONDACK. Late in June came the first public announcement of plans to restore daytime passenger service between New York and Montreal via the Delaware & Hudson. An August first target date was set. It was virtually met as revenue service kicked off on the 6th after a press run on the 5th.

Restoration of service on the D&H is significant in itself, but there is a larger story here. Namely the commitment by New York State to expansion of passenger service. This commitment is backed by $30 million from the legislature for preservation of passenger and freight service. While the ADIRONDACK is the most visible use of that money to date, it's planned as just a beginning.

How did the state get such a quick startup on the ADIRONDACK when Michigan, for example, is still waiting for its Chicago-Port Huron service after a couple of postponements? A major reason is availability of equipment. Cars retained by the D&H after exiting the passenger business plus equipment owned by the state-backed MTA are being used, these supplemented by the leased CP Skyline dome cars. Locomotives are also supplied by the D&H including the famous Alco PA's. The D&H itself has been cooperative--even enthusiastic about the idea. New York has assumed many of the responsibilities and expenses normally borne by Amtrak in launching new routes.

My ADIRONDACK experience began on a Saturday morning at Croton-Harmon. Combined trains 71, the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS to Buffalo and 69, the ADIRONDACK, pulled in right on time at 9:20. It was a rather formidable consist, with a baggage car, 5 ex-NYC coaches (mostly non-refurbished), and a trio of MTA cars for Montreal. I settled down in a former C&EI car in pretty good condition for the trip north. An Amtrak hostess who normally works other routes was along for the round trip with a New York City-based Amtrak man making the trip to check ticketing procedures. The hostess distributed pillows, postcards and schedules and information.

The day was pleasant and beautiful following the overcast skies and rain of Friday--a great day to again watch the scenery unfold along the Hudson River. Things went well as the first 110 miles to the New York capital clicked by--with arrival 5 minutes late because of long station stops.

The CP dome--repainted in D&H colors tho only leased--was already attached to a PC switcher. It coupled to the rear and backed off with the 3 MTA cars, shifting them to an adjacent track where a pair of low nose Alco freight diesels, again D&H property waited. An additional coach, former EL, was already attached to the units. Train 71 to Buffalo eased out 7 minutes behind as the switching continued. At 11:42, 2 minutes late, we were off.

The trip today takes a little longer than it did in pre-1971 days because of a backup move needed to reach D&H trackage in Albany. After crossing the bridge to the Albany side of the river, we backed down an interchange track to a point opposite the former Albany passenger station. It still stands but with an expressway rather than tracks nearby. Ten minutes after departing the new station we moved forward, northbound, toward our first stop on the D&H. The Watervliet-Colonie station consists of a tiny shelter and one car length of freshly laid asphalt. It's directly opposite the main D&H shops. The former LAURENTIAN didn't take this route at all for several years prior to Amtrak--rather joining the D&H at Schenectady after 15 miles or so on the PC.

Shortly after inauguration, the ADIRONDACK was carrying about 50 passengers in and out of New York City. The Saturday count hit 100--the biggest day yet. Maximum loadings occurred between Albany and Saratoga Springs. I noted a lot of local travel--groups of adults and kids taking a train ride for the heck of it.

Seating for food in the dome is limited to about 15--meaning waits were the rule to get service. With limited kitchen facilites available, the menu--prepared especially for the ADIRONDACK--was not overwhelming. But there was a limited selection of hot food. Regular diners are being refurbished and are supposed to be ready by November 1st. Presumably food selection will be more complete then.

As we moved up the line, top speed was about 50. The ride was pretty good at that speed--generally better than the PC track between Croton-Harmon and Albany at 70 or so. Some stretches had to be negotiated at 40 or even 35 due to the twisting nature of the line--particularly along Lake Champlain. State-sponsored track improvements are supposed to improve the schedule by 30 minutes or more by November. Running times for the most part seem reasonable.

It's no exaggeration to say that the ride along Lake Champlain is one of the more scenic rail trips in the country. The dome is a real advantage and was

completely full much of the time along that stretch. Around the end of September--fall foliage time in those parts--it should really be spectacular.

I spoke with a young woman from Colorado during a late lunch. She had been working in New York for most of the summer and was now heading to Montreal to visit relatives. A bus trip north was in prospect until she learned about the train at the last minute and changed her travel plans. It was her second time ever on a train, and she was enjoying every minute--the ride, the scenery. Indeed, inauguration publicity and large Amtrak ads in newspapers touting both Montreal runs seemed to spread the word rather effectively.

At Whitehall we met our opposite number as scheduled. It was headed by a pair of D&H's famous Alco PA's. They were trailed by 3 refurbished D&H coaches and a dome. Both sets of equipment will have PA's and upgraded cars when repairs and refurbishing are complete. The MTA equipment and freight units are temporary.

The afternoon's only problem was a malfunction of wayside signals north of Fort Ticonderoga, meaning restricted speeds for 20 minutes or so and that amount of lateness when we eased into Plattsburgh, my destination. I would spend the night there--at a vintage, but inexpensive hotel, before heading south again on Sunday.

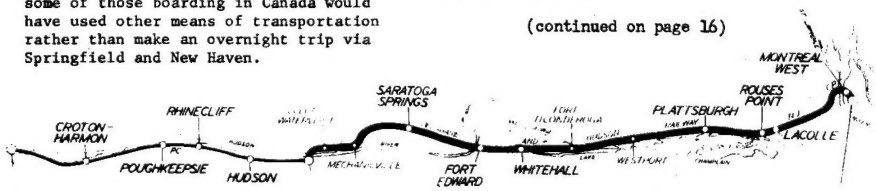
Sunday was another gem of a day for the 320 miles back to New York. Obviously no problems with the border crossing that day since #68 rolled into Plattsburgh's antique station with several minutes to spare. An assorted crowd of 20 had gathered to board--several aside from me going all the way to New York--some just joyriding. That swelled the passenger count to almost 100. The conductor's Amtrak report showed 60 originating in Canada with about 25 going all the way and another dozen bound for Albany. To put it another way, less than 25% of the more than 100 passengers handled that day on the D&H were potential Montrealer passengers--the great majority were "new business." And it seems logical that some of those boarding in Canada would have used other means of transportation rather than make an overnight trip via Springfield and New Haven.

It was another pleasant trip southward marked by on-time performance and a lack of problems. The hostess and Amtrak rep were making the return journey as were the D&H crew members, dressed in gold jackets apparently acquired for excursions. One reminded me somewhat of Humphrey Bogart both in appearance and manner of speech. All were most pleasant and cordial. Just one minor complaint. The food service crew closed up shop rather early nearly two hours out of Albany. I don't object to giving them the chance to total their accounts but that seems to be pushing things a bit far. Especially when one must go for 2 hours without snacks or drinks until departure from Albany. Not only that, but the snack bar coach south of Albany hadn't been stocked very well since virtually everything was gone minutes out of there. Not one sandwich remained, for example.

Our Albany arrival came 5 minutes ahead of the scheduled 4:30, giving more than ample time for switching and picture taking. This followed another perfect meet at Whitehall with the PA-powered consist. The trio of MTA coaches was attached to train 76--the 5pm Albany-New York run--consisting of 4 coaches. The first 2 were refurbished former NYC cars followed by a pair of MTA coaches obviously of Santa Fe vintage. A good crowd boarded and we accelerated down the Hudson right on time. The final lap, however, was to be more than routine.

Dozens waited in the late afternoon sun at Hudson. Several minutes slipped by, time enough it seemed to load, but the train did not move. A crew member walking toward the rear indicated that all was not well. The problem was a hissing sound between the last two coaches. It sounded like a steam leak, but certainly the boilers in our pair of E units weren't fired up on an 80-degree day. A faulty air hose between the cars was the answer. A spare was available as was a crew member from a waiting freight who was a little more up on such running repairs than the passenger men. In a few minutes things were patched up and we got rolling again, 20 minutes down.

(continued on page 16)



THE ROUTE OF THE ADIRONDACK

NEW YORK
GRAND CENTRAL STATION

ALBANY
ALBANY-RENSSELAER STATION

MONTREAL
WINDSOR STATION

Expo'74

or Thru the Lexan Darkly, to Wenatchee

by Glenn Lee

A special train is always a festive event; and a special train inaugurated to serve a World's Fair can be even more so. And if this special is a re-incarnation some 15 years later of the Great Northern's famous old CASCADIAN day train between Seattle and Spokane, well...there's just nothing to do but buy an overpriced ticket and climb aboard, good equipment or no.

Spokane was a little too far for a weekend daytime trip from Seattle; thus when I boarded the EXPO 74 at Seattle's King St. station, my ticket read only to Wenatchee, where I would stay before returning on Sunday afternoon. A pleasant crowd of about 30 gathered in the waiting room, and a few minutes before departure time was striding anxiously to a four-car consist. Amtrak F units 101 and 153 were leading Amtrak 7523-7524, an ex-SP articulated set; counter-lounge 8101, and GN 1328, an ex-EMPIRE BUILDER dome coach.

As I arrived at the forward vestibule of the articulated set, I saw a crowd forming in the absence of trainmen to direct loading. A moment later a teen-age boy, apparently confused, fell from the vestibule onto the platform, just in time to hear directions: "Spokane passengers to the rear, please." Hardly a pleasant way to start the daytime ride over the Cascades, but within moments all seemed seated and happy. A low rumble--and beside us passed Amtrak units 578 and 538, leading the EMPIRE BUILDER arriving some 26 minutes late. Once #7 halted, our EXPO 74 was moving, at 12:31 pm, one minute behind schedule.

North from the downtown Seattle Tunnel there were magnificent views of Puget Sound and the Olympics beyond, basking in the bright sunlight, which was a welcome contrast to the heavy midsummer rains of only a few weeks before. Off the grain terminal, the new Boeing hydrofoil raced on sea trials, throwing up a mighty rooster-tail of wake which will one day soon grace the harbor of Hong Kong, half a world away.

Because of slides along the BN line north of the ship canal, the EXPO 74 was operated on the southbound main line, directly beside the seawall that separates the right-of-way from the tiny Puget Sound beaches. With a modest north wind blowing, and the sun shining hot, it was pleasant to watch the activity along the shore. Here and there families and children splashed along the sand, turning to wave at the train. Few were actually in the water, for Puget Sound at its summer warmest is cold--with temperatures only in the high 50s.

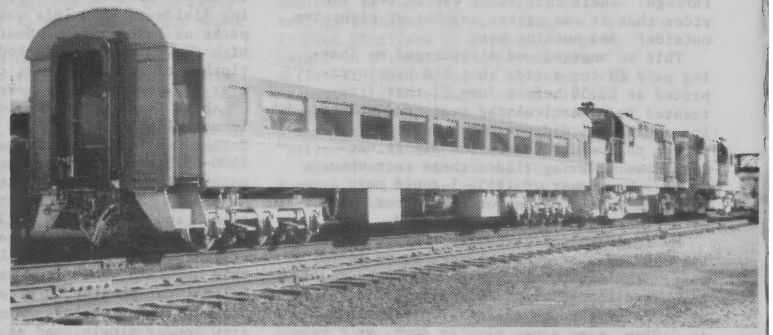
We stopped momentarily at Richmond Beach, but resumed speed in only moments. I was hoping that we were going to have an on-time run, even though the EXPO has been delayed many days on its slow schedule in the summer of 1974.

Suddenly below me, there was a twisting of limbs and swirling of heads as an unclothed couple sought cover while the EXPO roared past. This seemed a rather unlikely situation given the cool weather, even in summer, and her face registered an expression which idiomatically translated: "Geezuhs, Roy, you didn't tell me there were passenger trains along here!"

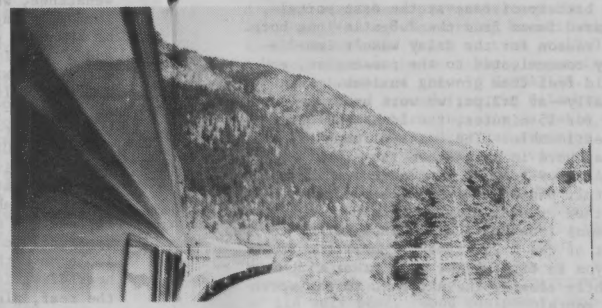
Once north from Edmonds, I moved into the attractive counter-lounge, and ordered a coke. With only about 30 passengers, the train was not crowded, and I could hear the young attendant telling another passenger: "that's an EMPIRE BUILDER menu. We don't serve after 7pm."

There were a few on at Everett, and as the train pulled through the tunnel under the downtown area, an air of relaxation fell across the passengers. Today there would be no activity or tension associated with a sold-out train, just an easy-going pull over the great mountains. I got up to walk around for a close look at the cars. I had been sitting in 7532, and noted that it rode very well, in contrast with other sisters (many now gone) in the SP articulated fleet. My end of the articulated set was painted in "lemon sherbet" and the opposite car was "raspberry sherbet," colors applied during the SP rebuilding program of the early 1960s. The seating upholstery was old, but not nearly as objectionable as the lexan windows. As a part of the deterioration process, lexan manages to look increasingly dirty, even after it has been washed. I moved to the one window in the car that was still of regular glass, and took solace also in the fact that the window across from me, though of lexan, was new, and was therefore somewhat useable. Other lexan windows in the car were in various stages of accelerating decay.

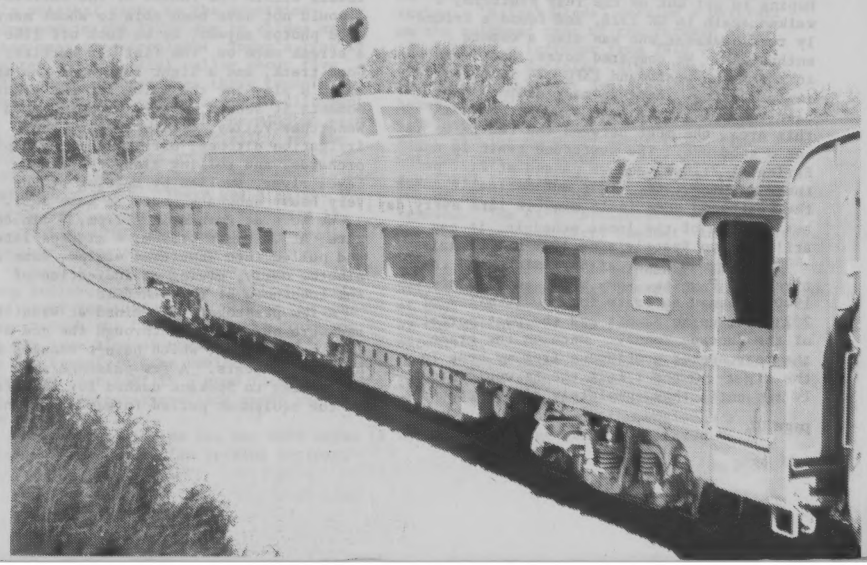
As we passed over the trestles of the Skykomish Valley lowlands, I walked back to visit GN 1328, used by through Spokane passengers. This is the 20th summer of operation for these great Budd-built cars, but the glow of youth is fading, and fading fast. Luggage was stored in the rear seats and the forward door would not close fully, allowing track noise into the coach. But the worst of the decline was evident in the dome, where all three forward window panels were of lexan, and none could be seen



The eastbound EXPO 74 is refueled at Wenatchee after loading passengers (above). Below, Glenn Lee's eastbound EXPO waits at Scenic, near the west portal of the Cascade Tunnel for a westbound freight to emerge from the 7.79-mile bore. Then 15 minutes will be allowed for tunnel fans to clear fumes. Hiway 2 overpass seen; tunnel portal hidden by locos. At right, once clear of the tunnel, the EXPO descends east slope of Stevens Pass a few miles east of tunnel. This section of line is CTC-equipped. Photos by Glenn Lee.
(Text of Glenn Lee's article continues on page 14.)



Two more photos by Ken Maylath of the ADIRONDACK's equipment. Above, the two D&H freight engines and an ex-Erie Lackawanna coach in D&H paint, part of the consist of the southbound train 68 at Albany, NY, where the train is taken apart and joined with the EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS. Below, a leased Canadian Pacific coffee shop dome coach on the rear of train 68, seen at Plattsburgh, NY. Car is lettered "Delaware and Hudson" in CP Rail's formerly red stripe.



through. Their only value was to tell the rider that it was either daytime or nighttime outside! And nothing more.

This so angered and discouraged me (having paid $9 for a ride that had been overpriced at $7.50 before June 9) that I retreated to my articulated seat, and sulked for awhile. I did not have the energy to return to the desecrated and almost useless dome. Having ridden these cars when new in the summer of 1955, I could only think to myself of one of the famous lines of antiquity: "O Tempes! O mores!"

My irritability gradually subsided under the onslaught of great scenery as we moved east. The mountains were covered by a light haze, and looked slightly surrealistic as we moved through the early afternoon. At 2:08pm, some seven minutes down, we passed Gold Bar, and could notice a wild and dashing "horsetail" waterfall to the north, swollen by the heavy runoff. A few minutes later we rushed onto the Index line change, which starts just west of Proctor Creek, and eliminates many miles of slow running and curvature. Ahead of us, spectacular even through the lexan, rose the stunning summit of Mt. Index and its court of guardians, rising stark, dark and sharp on the skyline. The mountains looked black and sullen, perhaps as if the sharpest peaks at Banff had been painted black for some somber occasion. No two trips through this area have ever been alike for me; and I was glad to be able to see them thus, especially from the comfortable setting of the "day train".

The line change, which has speeded up operations considerably in the Index area, rushed us through the area of the most spectacular scenery faster than I would have liked. The old CASCADIAN, ended on August 15, 1959; and the slower line, which was eliminated in stages in the early 1960's made for much enjoyable train riding here. Hoping to get out on the rear platform, I walked again to GN 1328, and found a friendly rear brakeman who was also a camera enthusiast. We compared notes, and I was able to check the westbound EXPO 74 in the siding at Baring. Because many sidings have been removed in the last several years in this area, the meet between the two EXPOs is not a good one. The westbound train is due Baring at 2:10pm, and we passed at 2:27 pm three minutes late. This automatically makes the westbound some 14-15 minutes late every day but because of the loose schedule, it can still arrive Seattle some 15 minutes early.

The air was clear at Skykomish, and the tired old F units, some built in the late 1940's seemed to brace for the 12 miles of 2.2 grade up to Scenic and the west portal of the Cascade Tunnel. Once on the grade, the roar seemed continuous from my seat in the first car and I felt the Fs would probably run until they completely disintegrated.

As we neared Scenic, we could look up to alpine meadows interspersed with melting fields of snow left over from the thick packs of last winter. Near the horizons high above, the snow looked like thick blothes of smooth shaving cream spread over the peaks by some unseen hand.

Above Scenic, the two levels of the former climb of the old GN line to the former 2-mile Cascade Tunnel, used from 1900-1929, can still be seen clearly, marked by cuts and decaying snowsheds. At 3:03pm EXPO 74 passed the Scenic west switch and slowed, and at 3:08pm, came to a halt. I hit the ballast with the brakeman, and noted the only noise in this mountain wonderland was an occasional car passing on Highway 2 nearby. Time for a few photos. A muffled rumble grew louder slowly, and at 3:16pm, BN 6927 led a three-unit freight west from the tunnel. I was hoping we'd get underway quickly, but we waited and waited----while the battery of fans at the east portal cleared fumes from the 7.8-mile-long bore. The reason for the delay wasn't immediately communicated to the passengers, and one could feel them growing anxious. But finally--at 3:31pm, we were underway, again, and for 15 minutes, the lexan was not objectionable. The Cascade Tunnel is a great bore in more sense than one.

A heavy roar of fans announced the east portal, and at 3:48pm we emerged into another crystal clear day, and began the descent from Berne along Nason Creek to the foot of the 2.2% grade at Merritt. The canyon is tight here, with great ridges tightly closing the sky both to the north and south.

In the siding at Merritt was a long westbound freight led by BN 6392, and which included several helpers on the rear.

The long, sweeping curve at the base of the grade at Merritt has been defiled in recent years by transmission-line towers within the radius of the curve.But I would not have been able to shoot many good photos anyway, as we took off like a streak once on "the flat" at Merritt. Good track, and a light load made the miles child's play for the aging Fs, and within moments it seemed we were dropping down the Wenatchee Valley, criss-crossing the irrigation ditches, darting through apple orchards, and rolling along the flood-level river, swollen by melting of the very heavy snowpack, even in late July.

We were at Peshastin 4:27pm, 7 minutes late; At Cashmere 4:39pm, 4 minutes late, and pulled into Wenatchee 4:53pm, some 2 minutes early, giving an indication of the looseness of the schedule.

A few passengers detrained at Wenatchee, and were quickly gone through the gem-like brick depot, which hasn't changed a hair in 20 years. A few passengers continuing to Spokane dashed for the train as the equipment pulled forward, but there

was no need to rush--the units were being spotted adjacent to the fueling rack south of the depot.

Departure was on time, and I stood for a minute or more in the heat watching the train disappear. It was good to be back in Wenatchee and good to feel the caress of the dry heat. I would enjoy my stay in this relaxed, pretty community alongside the rushing Columbia.

Returning to Seattle on the EXPO 74 was a much better experience than going on the round trip to Wenatchee. First, there was a better set of equipment, which included F units 102 and 152; ex-CB&Q TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR dome coach "Silver Bluff" counter-lounge 8102; and 7532-7533, another set of ex-SP articulated equipment. Second, the passenger load was doubled, with about 60 aboard leaving Wenatchee; and third, the front windows of Silver Bluff's dome, regular glass, were also fairly clean. A peppy atmosphere prevailed, and the air conditioning was working beautifully as we cleared the depot on time at 12:01pm and set off for the mountains, approximately on the schedule of the old CASCADIAN.

As we moved around from the Columbia River plain on which the city is built, the impact of the scenery was stunning. It was much more dramatic when viewed through clear glass. I could not have been more impressed by the comparison.

We dawdled a ways moving up through the apple orchards, but no one seemed to care. As we drew near Leavenworth, I found myself enjoying the day as much as I had ever enjoyed riding the SHASTA DAYLIGHT at its very best. Good equipment, even though elderly-and beautiful scenery on a warm and clear day made for the best of times.

At Leavenworth, where the railway runs east of town, I could see the branch line swing away to town, and toward the old alignment through the Tumwater Canyon, GN's original route to the mountains, abandoned in the 1920s due to slides and other operating problems. Today's line is located in a parallel valley about five miles east, and requires three tunnels to cross the ridges to the original alignment at Winton. The miles and the minutes seemed to drift by like smooth silk, and the kaleidoscipe flashed by all too quickly until at 1:16pm we plunged into the Cascade Tunnel once again. There was a slight tug and we settled down for the supposed 15-minute trip, this time descending the 1.57 per cent grade to the west.

I have always been slightly uneasy in long railway tunnels, and until this trip had never remained in the dome while passing through the Cascade Tunnel. This may be the same kind of uneasiness mentioned by San Francisco area residents who, while agreeing that BART is a good idea, express reluctance about travelling under the bay in the tube.

About eight minutes in, our EXPO began to slow. There were a few jerking motions, and then we suddenly came to a halt.--halfway through! My mind ranged to science fiction thrillers in which passengers caught in a tunnel disappeared into different landscapes, or different time frames. I also thought of an old San Francisco Chronicle headline concerning a streetcar crash in Twin Peaks Tunnel: "Terror in the Inky Blackness."

Ahead, steam was rising from the two F units, and was being illuminated by the yellow flashing light forward. From the dome seats, the yellow light itself could not be seen; but the flash, illuminating the rising steam, gave dome passengers the sensation that the engines had caught fire! And right here in the middle of the Cascade Tunnel, adjacent to safety bay number 9!

I became slightly nervous, and was made more so when I noticed that a roach, crawling right in front of me along the dome glass, disappeared into the rubber seal separating the glass from the stringer. Brrrr. Perhaps the roach felt he was going to be fumigated, I thought, as I smelled an ever-increasing barage of fumes flowing into the dome.

At 1:35pm, some 12 minutes after we stopped, I walked through the train. "They're stickin" said a trainman. A few more bits of listening here and there told the story. There had been a failure in the air brake system, and true to Westinghouse's plan, we stopped when the trouble started. A dutch door was open, and a cool wind could be felt flowing west, propelled by the massive fans at the east portal. However, at the forward end of the train, the fumes were bad and growing worse.

A concerned crew continued to work on the units for several minutes; and I felt this was time to examine the train, something I had been reluctant to do while passing through the scenery west from Wenatchee. "Silver Glade" carried a portrait on the bulkhead rear of the forward seating secton, a leftover from TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR days. Entitled "Bison Hunt Near the Mississippi," it depicted three buffalo being pursued by two stealthy hunters. A relaxed crowd occupied counter-lounge 8102, showing no worry about the delay. I noticed that the swinging door which separates the kitchen section from the lounge section at the forward end had been removed. The ex-SP articulated set had been painted "raspberry sherbet" in both ends. The rear car was hot, having had no air conditioning from at least Wenatchee. Still, a few passengers passed the time of day, unaffected by either the heat or by the darkness of the tunnel and the train's situation.

At 1:38pm we moved ahead slowly, with some jerking, and then stopped. I went to a vertibule again, and a trainman nervously told me: "the fumes in the engine are terrible. Better stay back inside." At

1:42pm we began moving very slowly, and negotiated the remainder of the descending grade at less than average speed. My thoughts were not only to the unpleasantness of being trapped in the middle of the tunnel thousands of feet down; but also on the relative stupidity involved in running the old F units in passenger service over such a demanding profile.

"I see the end of the tunnel. We're SAVED!" said the woman across from me loudly. Sure enough, the opening at the west portal, which first looked like a refuge bay light, grew larger and larger. At 1:55pm, 39 minutes after first entering the tunnel, we emerged into the bright sunlight and then stopped. Beside us was a long eastbound freight that had been delayed, with four units on the point and three helper units.

The freight crew and the EXPO's crew converged, and there was more crawling around the F units. At 2pm we moved forward a few feet, and then stopped. Finally, at 2:07pm, some 37 minutes late, we got underway from Scenic to descend to Skykomish. It was on this grade that the FAST MAIL had run away in 1943, and had leaped from the Tongo Trestle in one of the most spectacular GN wrecks ever. Electric locomotive 5011 was nearly destroyed in the mishap, having fallen a hundred feet or more to the creek below. I became uneasy thinking a repeat might be in store, but we were in Skykomish safely in good style, and passed the eastbound EXPO near the east switch, where it was on time.

Soon the afternoon parade of mountains, rivers, waterfalls, snowfields and forests occupied my mind, and I gradually relaxed to enjoy the magnificent show. We passed Baring, the normal meeting point, 35 minutes late; and arrived in Everett at 3:20pm, some 22 minutes down. It was a clear shot to Seattle on the shoreside line down Puget Sound, made more intriguing on Sunday afternoon by many picnicking families; and by many sailboats, decorating the waterway almost all the way to Seattle.

A sizeable portion of the crowd was off at Everett and Edmonds, and perhaps only 30 were aboard when we pulled into Seattle at 4:37pm, some 7 minutes late.

It was hot in Seattle when I climbed off; and I was glad to be heading for home. I mused how Amtrak has seriously hurt its image in Seattle by the present EXPO operation. The EXPO should leave Seattle 8am so that an evening could be spent at the Fair when arriving in Spokane. The later departure was supposedly to allow Portland passengers a train ride all the way, but the 13-hr. run, which can be made in 6 hours by bus from Portland direct, is of little appeal in the Rose City. Also, there are no discounts, so the Portland passenger pays the inflated Seattle-Portland fare as well as the inflated Seattle-Spokane fare.

I thought of the poor equipment, made almost desperately so by the lavish use of lexan, and the uncaring attitude of Amtrak which the lexan makes evident to even the most relaxed travelers. Finally, I thought about the serious risks involved in placing aged locomotives on a run with long steep grades, and operating such old units in the closed quarters of the longest rail tunnel in the western hemisphere.

Almost inevitably, the CASCADIAN will run again on the day service between Spokane and Seattle, and it will be well equipped, well maintained, and well run. However, the EXPO service in the summer of 1974 will never be remembered as having helped pave the way for revival of this pleasant and necessary train service in the Evergreen State.

(continued from page 10)

The next little surprise came at Croton-Harmon. During the engine change someone spotted a young boy slipping into a rest room, apparently with the idea of a free ride. He locked the door and wasn't about to come out in spite of the efforts of the conductor and Amtrak rep. Someone decided to call the police. But while one of the trainmen was doing so, the engineer, unaware of this little drama, and apparently feeling that 20 minutes late was enough, decided to get going. Get going we did, as I watched the trainman's futile run down the platform after the train. By the time the conductor could reach the signal cord, it was too late.

Once we were moving the attempt to talk the boy, about 10, out of the restroom proved successful. There was still another little surprise in store. He hadn't boarded the train at Croton-Harmon to begin with--rather at Albany. Not only that, but he rode on the OUTSIDE of the train for 110 miles--from there to Croton-Harmon before deciding it was a bit scary and he'd rather have more comfortable accommodations. The law had a reception committee waiting on the platform at Grand Central--15 minutes late, Not bad considering the various unscheduled events along the Hudson. Please, Amtrak has enough problems without stowaways.

THE LAURENTIAN

by Paul Rayton

(The following article, which looks back upon the predecessor of the ADIRONDACK, is reprinted from the February 7, 1972 (Vol. 2, No. 3) issue of this newsletter:)

DATE: APRIL 12, 1970

If railroads had theme songs for their passenger service, the Delaware and Hudson would surely have chosen "I Did It My Way." The individuality of the D&H had been a legend for years, and it held true right up until May 1, 1971.

The D&H provided above-average service to passengers: two trains daily in each direction, including an overnight run with sleeping cars. The scheduling of the trains was excellent, and amenities were not overlooked. Baggage service was available and every train carried some sort of food service. The night trains (MONTREAL LTD.) provided bar service and a Continental breakfast. The day trains (the LAURENTIAN) carried a real dining car with honest-to-goodness meals.

And the D&H provided something for the railfan too: operation of the last two surviving Alco PA engines gave the railroad yet another trump card in creating interest in its trains.

All Delaware and Hudson trains ran thru between New York City and Montreal; thus part of every thru trip was on the tracks of the Penn Central. Traveling up to Albany from New York this day, we had two cars headed for Montreal. One coach was an ancient heavyweight, the other a more recent product. Both exteriors were painted in D&H blue. The heavyweight coach had cleaner windows but the other coach was absolutely idyllic for riding--the air conditioning was in tiptop shape, and the air was cool and fresh-smelling. It was too much for one old lady, tho, who promptly complained to the conductor that it was too cold. Rather than evaluate her complaint, the conductor accepted it as fact. His method of adjusting the temperature was to unscrew the fuse of the air conditioning unit! I knew this would lead to disaster, especially after Albany when nobody would know this man's "system." So I watched for opportune moments to screw the fuse in and out, maintaining a constant temperature. After Albany, I screwed it in and left it in. Nobody else ever complained.

In what could be the best bit of latter-day railroad scheduling (and here there were two separate companies involved, which made it all the more extraordinary) the train coming in from New York arrived at 11:10am. It was carded for a 5-minute stop in the tiny "Albany-Rensselaer" station, after which it would continue west across central New York to all the major cities of the "Water Level Route" and terminate at Buffalo. Also at 11:10 another train arrived at Albany. It was just now coming in from Buffalo. Its schedule called for a 10-minute stop, whereupon it would depart for New York. Three trains with synchronized timings. And this same 3-way synchronism would prevail in midafternoon for the southbound LAURENTIAN.

In a flash, yard workers had the two cars off the Penn Central train and began to shunt them over to a nearby track, where an Alco, a baggage car, and a dining car were waiting. People were anxious for the connection to be made. They were hungry after the foodless ride up from the city.

The cars were coupled, steam and air connected. At 11:15 and 11:20 respectively the two Penn Central trains departed. We were scheduled to leave at 11:25, but there was a mechanical problem with the trucks of one car. We had to get a yard mechanic with the proper knowhow to make the repair.

Forty minutes later we pulled out of Albany. We followed a rather different route for the first few miles than the traditional D&H route. The LAURENTIAN had been permanently rerouted to Penn Central trackage for the 17 miles to Schenectady, thence north on the D&H right of way.

With our light load, the venerable

Alco had a chance to demonstrate its noted quick acceleration. My feelings were that it was "okay," but I didn't think it was all that fast, really. I have seen E and F units pull out equally fast. My most lasting impression was bad--billowing clouds of black smoke that emanated from this PA representative.

On the Penn Central we traveled fast. I clocked us at 75mph, and thought we would be making an effort to make up our lost time. Unfortunately, once we arrived on the D&H, a slow order took over and we were doomed to plod along the rest of the afternoon at speeds seldom exceeding 50mph.

That was all right with me, tho. The northern New York scenery deserved the slow, contemplative pace that we set, and I reveled in it. April had done its best, but snow patches remained on the ground. The farther north we went, the more visible the snow became. (The ground had been bare leaving Albany.) Under trees, lurking in dark glades, patches of white told their tale of winter just past. Still the trees were cloaked in grey, not yet daring to make even their first tentative ventures out into the new year, the new spring.

Our first stop on the D&H was the historic horse racing town of Saratoga Springs. The station stop for Saratoga had been moved to the outskirts of town in recent years. Yet even at that it showed a little foresight: I noted two or three stub-end tracks useful only for storage of privately owned rail cars--like during the racing season. The travelers hadn't been forgotten here.

It was time for eats now. I went forward into the dining car. The car had a layout seen nowhere else in the country. The kitchen was at the center of the car and the table space was equally divided between the two ends of the car. Each end area could seat some 14 persons. Because of the low off-season patronage, only the nearer end of these two areas was in service. The other table area was a sort of office for the crew.

On the cover of the "double duty" menu was a pleasing photograph of a D&H passenger train running along high cliffs of the west side of Lake Champlain. Inside, one half of the menu listed the bar selections; the other half was the food selection. Full meals were very reasonable: a Baked Half Chicken, with apple sauce, carrots and peas, whipped potatoes, rolls and beverage listed at $2.50. Four other entrees were available, including Baked "Seasonal" Fish ($2.35), Corned Beef Hash ($2.10) and Tuna Salad Plate ($2.00). Minor variations in the side dishes occurred.

Lesser sandwiches were available a la carte for 90¢-$1.50. A pot of tea on the side cost 35¢, as did most other dinner drinks.

I decided to try the fish. To accompany it I ordered a split of white wine (90¢). In all honesty, I must say that I was not overwhelmed by the fish. It too obviously had been frozen, it was dry on the tongue and--despite massive doses of lemon juice--it just didn't have much taste. The potatoes were lukewarm and slightly lumpy, the vegetables fresh out of a can. The rolls were warm but were the type that are mostly air and which crush back into dough when you try to butter them.

We came into the river settlement of Fort Edward. I could just see the rapids of the Hudson River out the window. Our passenger load doubled from 30 to 60 here, as a throng of young

schoolchildren boarded for a ride on a passenger train. They would pick a day when it was 40mins late. But such a triviality didn't concern them now. A train ride would be a major event in many of their lives, one not easily forgotten. I myself was glad they were in the coach and I in the diner. Their verbally-expressed thrills soon became nerve-wracking.

I lingered over the meal for a spell. The wine helped the situation. I was not impressed by the food itself, but I was enjoying the meal. The interior of the dining car was pleasantly appointed and quite livable. And the scenery outside was enough to distract from even a cup of hemlock. Many times as a youth I had made this same trip north from Saratoga, north along the Champlain Canal.

And today, making the trip for the first time by train, I was at last free of the deadening effects of driving. I could look around and enjoy the water in the canal, the grey skies above, and the fresh ground newly emerging from winter's grasp.

Good old D&H! I noticed that my wine glass--tho unchilled--was crystal. The D&H emblem was cut in the glass. With dessert came a silver individual creamer --again bearing the D&H emblem on the side. Both were battered from years of use, and clearly relics of bygone days, but seeing them reminded me of how good this train was, by comparison with many others running comparable distances in 1970. But the single most noticeable D&H "special" was the crew for this dining car: the only line in the country to have a waitress serving the tables!

My trip on the LAURENTIAN came to an end at Whitehall, NY, much to my regret. The vistas of Lake Champlain from the windows of the train would have to wait. We pulled into the station at 1:50pm, now just 30mins late. The desolate trackside was deserted save for a youthful station agent--to whom this was merely another train--and adults meeting the schoolchildren.

Train orders were passed to the engineer, and with two blasts from the air horn the LAURENTIAN resumed its northward trek to Montreal. I stood on the platform as the train went under a bridge and disappeared around a distant bend. The cries of the children, shrill with the excitement of their adventure, quickly were boxed up into the waiting automobiles and with a roar the autos departed.

Then as I stood, a great silence descended on me and my single suitcase. No birds sang, no locust buzzed. Occasional cars went "gr-r-r-r-r-rip" across the iron lattice of the track-spanning bridge. I was alone underneath the long, classic-design wooden rainshed, stretching now along empty tracks. Already, miles separated me from the life of the train. Still, I saw it even again when faintly, ever so softly, the Alco's familiar horn once more spoke back across the warmth of the early spring afternoon. The sound wafted into Whitehall, edged under the rainshed canopy, tickled past the rails and shattered against the rocky ballast. The old wood-and-brick station stood aloof and ignored the nuisance.

A newborn breeze blew a weather-weary leaf past my feet and I heard the splat of a drop of water hitting the asphalt platform. A rainstorm was arriving from the Adirondacks, so I couldn't tarry longer with the melancholy ghosts of this once great junction depot.

NOTES ON THE "ADIRONDACK" FROM HITHER AND YON:

THE D&H RAILWAY put out its own route brochure on the new train, a small, 20-p. booklet in blue on white with welcoming messages from the governor and the president of D&H. It invites comments to be sent to Mr. J.T. Colpoys, Asst. VP-Service, D&H Bldg., 40 Beaver St., Albany NY 12207. Artwork accompanying Ken Maylath's article is from the booklet..... THE NEW YORKER, Aug. 26 issue, carries a writeup by "Ernest M. Frimbo" (pen name) on the press run, the first such article since the delivery of the Turboliners from the East Coast to Chicago. Some facts gleaned from it: the Canadian name "LAURENTIAN" could not be revived on this NY state train, thus "ADIRONDACK" was used; 1st run leaving NY passed a 3rd-rail fire that held up two commuter trains; railroad president Carl Bruce Sterzing, Jr. is apparently a railfan--he rode in the cab from Albany, leaving invited guests in his private observation car; Mendel's Catering Service of Albany provided a highly-praised buffet luncheon for guests; Amtrak's Harold Graham carved the luncheon pate; author calls the ADIRONDACK the slowest train he's ever ridden on the route, but speed is "not the point"--the scenery is..... READER RICHARD PALMER tells us D&H is using the old LAURENTIAN numbers 35 & 36 for the train, ignoring Amtrak numbers. D&H provides its own congenial conductors and trainmen, with yellow or blue blazers and grey trousers to match railroad colors..... READER JEROME ROSENFELD informs us about the Alco engines used as alternates to the PA units: RS-11 #5004 and RS36 #5020 were seen; these are not passenger-equipped, but the passenger cars need no steam, being equipped with electro-mechanical air conditioning. No. 5004 has high

hood and was built for NYC, but order was cancelled and it went to D&H. The 5020 has standard low nose. Both are 1800hp engines.....

FROM JACK FERRY: The D&H has purchased 2 shark-nosed locomotives from the Monongahela Railway, a part of Penn Central, to be used as backup power for the ADIRONDACK as well as freight service.....

mixed train of thoughts

(continued from page 8)

SO HELP US we didn't see the House Commerce Committee's report on Condition of Amtrak Trains (issued in June) before writing the article on our SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR trip last issue. There were so many similarities in the complaints that it is uncanny. House investigators rode 11 trains, but the SFZ report interested us most immediately. The writer gives a deadpan description of the problems he encountered, then says: "All of the conditions of this train were paled on the second evening of the trip when the train derailed in Stratton, Nebraska." This evidently caught his attention, because he spent much time detailing how many people were injured and what were the possible causes of the derailment. He even went back into Amtrak's records and determined that each of the 5 derailed cars had had anywhere from 2 to 106 wheels replaced over a 13-month period (the wreck was said to have been caused by a broken wheel)..... THE PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL is suffering from lack of promotion, says a man in a position to know. He calls the wying and backing of the train into Vancouver station a senseless operation. It was started to help save time at the border inspection when passengers had to detrain for inspection. Now that Senator Magnuson has improved that situation, it's unnecessary to have the train turned before southbound departure to save time consumed at the border. Turning could be done in half the time if done on the southbound departure..... ALL-TIME SPEED RECORD for a steel-wheeled vehicle on steel rails of over 250mph was set on Aug. 14 at the DOT's Pueblo, Colorado grounds, with a linear induction motor research vehicle (the former record was 234mph, set by the same vehicle last April). Maybe if they get it going a little faster it'll become airborne and they'll join the Wright Brothers in the history books.....

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SEPTEMBER EIGHTH MARKS the last day of seasonal operation of Canadian National's Auto-With-You car carrying via passenger train between Edmonton and Toronto. After that your car must go on a separate train subject to delay..... THE BAY STATE, Amtrak's Boston-NY via Springfield train has been under partial state subsidy for two years, but is now running without subsidy because Amtrak reportedly wouldn't accept conditions of service performance the state demanded. The Massachusetts state Transportation Sedretary expressed surprise at the selection of the Boston-Chicago via Cleveland experimental route, since relations between Amtrak and the state are described as "less than amicable"..... AMTRAK GOT FEELERS, a report tells us, from the new owners of Cincinnati Union Terminal for possible use of the facility. And the Cleveland depot has been sold to a private party who will allow Amtrak's use of it for the upcoming Chicago-Boston train for a nominal sum... PRECISION NATIONAL CORPORATION of Mt. Vernon, IL has purchased four E9 locomotives from ICG. They are ex-FEC locos numbered 2036, 2037, 2038, & 4035..... A FIRE IN Amtrak dome sleepr 9210 was discovered in the New Orleans passenger terminal on Aug. 16, in bedroom F. The car was heavily damaged from the fire which spread after evidently smouldering for a day as the car sat unused..... THE BROADWAY LIMITED was seen on August 25 with two 11-bedroom cars replacing bad-ordered slumbercoaches ..... STATE OF MISSOURI has informed the MoPac that it won't get any more freight rate increases until it raises its passenger train speed limits back to pre-Amtrak main-line speed..... AMTRAK HAS SET a target date of Sept. 11 for re-opening station ticket offices closed by Penn Central in these cities: Jackson, Battle Creek and Niles, MI; Canton and Lima, OH..... WASHINGTON UNION STATION now sports a big U.S. map installed by the National Park Service. And guess what--it shows only highways; no rail routes on the otherwise detailed 8x16-ft map.....

NARP'S DRIVE TO raise money to keep Anthony Haswell on as Chairman till the end of the year has been successful..... PASSENGER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES on the SILVER METEOR between Aug. 5 & 15 tested a special child's chair in the diner--it straps to a regular dining car seat..... AMTRAK HAS ESTABLISHED an Adequacy of Service Bureau to deal with passenger complaints that arise with respect to the ICC adequacy standards issued on April 1..... A MINOR DERAILMENT of the CHAMPION that left NY Aug. 7 occurred in Tampa; several wheels of the engines went off the track while backing out of the station, causing an hour's delay--no injuries or damage..... A WELL-RESEARCHED, detailed article critical of Amtrak, focussing on the situation in Texas appears in the current issue of Texas Monthly magazine, authored by Griffin Smith... THE NORFOLK-CINCINNATI route voted by Congress and named as an experimental route by the DOT should get running sometime late this year. We have a tentative schedule for the train: leave Norfolk 2:05pm, arrive Cincy 7am next day; leave Cincy 11:30pm, arrive Norfolk 5:10pm. There would be thru cars to Chicago, connecting at Cincinnati. Two coaches, a sleeper and diner-lounge would run thru to Chicago, with a baggage-dorm running Norfolk-Cincinnati. Train numbers are 63 (westbound) and 62.....

* * *

AMTRAK ANNOUNCED LATE in August that calls for bids for the new Richmond, VA station will remain open until Sept. 18. The new structure is to be built in the Greendale section of Richmond, and construction is to start in the fall. Meanwhile Richmond travelers are up in arms about the fact that the MIAMIAN will not make a passenger stop in that city..... AMTRAK HAS PURCHASED former C&O coach 1642 from a private owner in Ohio. This car will be renumbered #5437..... ILLINOIS CENTRAL GULF is in the process of painting the ends of its old commuter cars bright orange. The attention-getting markings were ordered by the National Transportation Safety Committee following its investigation of the ICG commuter train collision at 27th street in Chicago. The paint scheme is similar to that applied to the new Highliner commuter cars..... COMPLAINTS ARE NOW being heard about the discontinuance of the NY-L.A. transcontinental sleeper via Kansas City. Passengers continue to arrive in K.C. off the NATIONAL LIMITED only to find that the thru sleepr is off and there is no space on the SOUTHWEST LIMITED..... WITH PENN CENTRAL lines thru Indianapolis closed, all bad order cars and refurbished equipment now travels on the rear of the NATIONAL LIMITED to St. Louis and thence to Chicago on the STATE HOUSE..... FIRST IN CALIFORNIA: for the first time, the National Railway Historical Society is meeting in the San Francisco area between August 28 and Sept. 2. Events include an inspection of BART, trip to the Sierra Railroad and the railroad museum at Rio Vista..... THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC has agreed to preserve the old El Paso and Southwestern RR Co. depot hidden in a park in downtown Tucson. Conservationists have been up in arms over SP's plans to "develop" the 30-acre parcel of land the depot is on, and the railroad promised to save as much of it as possible..... TRANSIT OPERATING SUBSIDIES apparently remain in a bill before Congress, tho transit promoters will find the size of the funding cut way back.....

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Florida seeks a fast 'gurbo train' service between Miami and Orlando and restoration of the New Orleans-Jacksonville route."

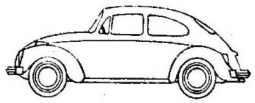
--New York Times, July 18, 1974

"Conservation groups that had vigorously opposed the spur expressed disappointment ate the decision, which the city has acknowledged will cause the removal of 134 trees, some of them dating to the early 19th century."

--New York Times, August 18, reporting on city's decision to build a rail spur thru Forest Park to connect Jamaica and Kennedy Airport

(Eating the decision won't help; they made another copy of it.)

Urban-Suburban Transit



SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION Claude S. Brinegar, in one of those occasional important speeches that allows one to pick out overt and covert clues to the federal government's current thinking on transportation problems, told the Society of Automotive Engineers in Anaheim, California on August 14 some things about mass transit and car use in cities.

His most important points were four: (1) at least until 1980 the government should give assistance in the $1.5-$2 billion a year range to help cities, especially large ones, improve public transit; this help should be for mainly cost-efficient solutions of existing transport problems, and only secondarily for stimulating economic growth and increasing central city density (he thinks too many rail projects involve the latter objectives). (2) He favors greater flexibility in use of federal funds, and emphasizes the DOT's goal of bringing highway and UMTA money into a single fund, as well as encouraging local decision making. (3) Incentive systems should be devised for more efficient automobile use of existing streets and highways--such as stiff parking taxes, rush hour licensing, or limiting auto access to central city cores. (4) The search for better mass transit technology should go on: attractive alternatives to private cars should be developed, and he places highest value on the invention of a "lovable bus."

Brinegar is concerned with the DOT's future role in mass transit because he sees the country as being at a crossroads now: UMTA's 1970 program of "quick-fix" grants to help reverse transit decline has been successful, and the inflexibility of the urban highway funding process overcome (read: trust fund broken).

In all his comments it's clear that Brinegar doesn't like rail transit, doesn't want to spend too much federal money, and prefers buses for their low cost. He is definitely concerned, however, with the problem of why people don't want to ride the blasted things.

A TRANSIT MINI-EDITORIAL: Why don't more people ride public transit systems? One reason is quite evident in these parts--they are simply unreliable, even the best ones. The AC Transit, publicly-owned bus system in our area as of this writing (Aug. 27) is entering its 58th day of non-operation due to a strike, with no settlement in sight. Everyone is up in arms about it, but nothing seems to happen. Why can't there be better machinery for settling wage disputes of public transit systems without the loss of service? The public will be the victim of the costs in any case. Even if an exorbitant wage settlement had been made early on, it would have been cheaper for the taxpayer than the personal costs of enduring weeks without service. The strike has literally cost your editor hundreds of dollars already, far more than higher taxes to pay for higher wages would have cost. There seems to be no sense of responsibility to the public on any side of the problem. Mr. Brinegar, please note--a lovable bus is first of all one that doesn't stop running without warning. Whoever can come up with creative solutions to the human problems of labor relations in public transit systems would be making a big contribution to the transportation problems of the nation.

TRANSIT BRIEFS: THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC put in a request to the California Public Utilities Commission on Aug. 23 for a 111% fare increase on its San Francisco peninsula runs..... BART IS STILL planning the inauguration of runs to San Francisco for Sept. 16, thereby finally putting the entire system in operation. It will not take up an option for purchase of more cars from the Rohr Corp..... THE MILWAUKEE ROAD'S Chicago-Elgin commuter line was to see first use of 36 new bi-level cars from the Budd Co. late in August; the first was delivered Aug. 19.....
"IN THE GOOD old days, U.S. commuters were better off than now," says the Wall Street Journal (Aug. 14) in the 3rd of its series on transit. In the 4th (Aug. 19) it covers New York's MTA, and in the 5th (Aug. 26) praises Philadelphia's automated Lindenwold line.....

Amtrak A Long Haul Affair?

Is there any future for the long-haul passenger train? Time and again we have heard the message in one form or another, mostly emanating from the Department of Transportation in Washington, and also echoing from 955 L'Enfant Plaza North in that same city, that the future of rail transportation lies in corridor and short haul trains. It is no secret that the DOT has placed Amtrak under tremendous pressure to eliminate long-distance service and concentrate on short routes, where the profit is said to lie. Amtrak seems to have taken the message to heart, since its equipment orders thus far have been strongly oriented toward corridor service: 13 French-designed Turboliners, 57 non-powered Metroliner-type cars, 200 low-level high-density coaches--these in the past year. What new equipment has been ordered for long-distance trains? An order for 235 bi-level cars is expected shortly.

What reason is there for making capital investments in long-distance equipment? There's a good one: long-distance service accounts for over 70% of Amtrak's revenue passenger miles, while corridor trains rack up only 23.2%, and short-haul trains only 6.6%! These are Amtrak's figures for fiscal year 1974 just ended--total revenue passenger miles are as follows: long-distance 2,922,800,000; corridor 964,300,000; short-haul 276,300,000. And in the present fiscal year Amtrak predicts an increase (regardless of its ability to handle it) of 1,770,000,000 passenger miles in long-haul business, or over 60%! Corridor traffic will increase 72.4% or 699,500,000 miles, and short-haul 130.7% or 297,300,000 miles. The rest of Amtrak's increase will be in miscellaneous runs, 186.7% or 91,100,000 miles. The growth of total system revenue passenger miles is expected to be 68.7%, or almost 3 billion more miles.

Can Amtrak possibly serve all the potential riders by seeking to increase its long-distance fleet by only 235 cars? These cars, about to be ordered, cannot possibly be ready for at least two years. By that time, the number of passenger cars that will have to be scrapped will leave Amtrak with a net loss in its fleet of cars for long-distance trains. Amtrak is moving backwards in equipping its fleet that serves the most patrons, while building up corridor equipment that serves less than one-fourth of its ridership. Doesn't this sound as if Amtrak is following some pre-conceived notion that only corridors are to be serviced adequately, a notion originating from the old White House?

If Amtrak were queried on this matter, it would doubtless answer that the reason that the bulk of its capital investments is being put into the smallest parts of its system is that they are predicted to be profitable, while long-distance trains are forecast to run at a deficit. Amtrak recently estimated that by fiscal 1978 it would earn $5 million on corridor trains, $11.8 million on short-distance runs, and lose $62.3 million on long-haul trains, for a total deficit of $45.5 million. Isn't this what a proper business does--put its money where the potential profit is? But wait a minute--if you read the fine print in Amtrak's forecasts made last March you will find that the corporation admits that "The complete elimination of long haul routes would not result in the elimination of the 1978 deficit. This is so because certain semi-fixed costs allocated to the long haul routes would not be reduced under an avoidable cost approach and would have to be reallocated to the corridor and short haul routes."

So in other words Amtrak would operate at a loss even without long-distance trains, and then it would be the corridor and short-haul trains that would be the money-losers. Who's pulling whose leg here? Are these semi-fixed costs being allocated arbitrarily to long-distance trains because the administration has something against them? Is Amtrak using the supposed potential profitability of corridor routes as an excuse to let its cruise trains slip to the point where riders can't be served and ridership thus falls off, making a self-fulfilling prophecy of the failure of long-distance trains? Amtrak should have been ordering many more long-distance cars, and ordering them long before this.